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**TWO STATE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES AND ONE CO-CONSPIRATOR
SENTENCED FOR WIDESPREAD INTERNATIONAL BRIBES-FOR-VISAS SCHEME**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Assistant Attorney General Christopher A. Wray of the Criminal Division and United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott of the Eastern District of California announced today that a career State Department employee was sentenced to 60 months imprisonment, and her husband, a former consular employee at the U.S. Embassy in Sri Lanka, was sentenced to 63 months imprisonment, for their role in masterminding a bribery and visa fraud scheme involving the unlawful issuance of approximately two hundred visas from the U.S. Embassies in Sri Lanka, Fiji and Vietnam. One other individual who served as a "visa broker" in the scheme was also sentenced today.

LONG N. LEE, 52, a now terminated U.S. State Department Foreign Service Officer and career State Department employee, and her husband, ACEY R. JOHNSON, 34, a former Consular Associate, were sentenced by Judge Garland E. Burrell, Jr., in Sacramento, California. In addition to their prison terms, LEE and JOHNSON were ordered to forfeit \$750,000.00 in seized cash and properties purchased with ill-gotten gains, and were ordered to each pay a fine of \$12,500. Each defendant was also ordered to serve a three year term of supervised release following release from imprisonment and to pay a \$300 assessment. In addition, \$13,000 in cash was previously administratively forfeited. RAMESH K. JAISINGH, 57, of Fairfax, Virginia, was sentenced by Judge Burrell to 21 months imprisonment, pay \$100 assessment, and ordered to serve three years of supervised release. Under federal law, the defendants will be required to serve at least 85 percent of the prison time imposed.

Defendant LEE expressed her "deepest apology" to the State Department, her former colleagues, and the Court for the "disappointment, shame, and dishonor caused" by her conduct. Defendant JOHNSON also apologized for his conduct.

"Entry into this country may not be bought or sold," said Assistant Attorney General Wray. "Today's sentences demonstrate the government's resolve to protect the integrity of the U.S. visa process by prosecuting those government employees and others who seek to illegally enrich themselves while betraying the public trust."

United States Attorney Scott said, "In this era more than ever, it is vital to ensure integrity in

the issuance of United States visas. The actions of defendants LEE and JOHNSON, two Americans occupying significant positions of trust, were reprehensible. I am gratified by the successful collaboration of so many agencies in this investigation, including the Diplomatic Security Service of the United States Department of State, the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, and other federal and state agencies.”

LEE was the Chief Administrative Officer at the U.S. Embassies in Sri Lanka and Fiji from 1997 to 2003, and had previously served as the Consular Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam between 1995 and 1997. JOHNSON had worked as a Consular Associate in the U.S. Embassies in Sri Lanka and Fiji between 1997 and 2003.

The convicted defendants, including LEE and JOHNSON, admitted that LEE agreed to arrange for the issuance of U.S. visas in exchange for bribes as early as 1995. Both she and JOHNSON, acting in concert, continued the scheme from 1997 through their arrest in April 2003.

As part of the scheme, "visa brokers" located in Northern Virginia, the greater Sacramento area, and the greater Los Angeles area, collected bribes from foreign nationals, ordinarily from India or Vietnam, and steered the nationals through the visa application process, including travel to the U.S. Embassies where LEE and JOHNSON were posted. LEE and/or JOHNSON then caused visas to be issued to the nationals and later accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribe payments from the brokers. On instructions from LEE and JOHNSON, the brokers broke bribe payments into transactions under \$10,000 to avoid scrutiny by financial institutions and law enforcement, and then forwarded payments to LEE, JOHNSON and their family members. Using the bribe payments, LEE and JOHNSON, among other things, amassed \$350,000 in cash (deposited in various bank accounts or secreted in their Oregon home), sent a series of payments to their children, and acquired and/or maintained two separate properties—a seaside home in Port Orford, Oregon, and a vacation home in Bailey, Colorado.

A total of 10 defendants have been convicted in the case. Seven other visa broker defendants have pleaded guilty and await sentencing. Minesh Prasad, 30, of Sacramento, California, is scheduled to be sentenced on October 29, 2004, before Judge Burrell. Defendant Phuong Hien Lam Trinh, 37, of Gardena, California, is scheduled to be sentenced on November 8, 2004 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Gregory G. Hollows. Defendants Vinesh Prasad, 33, of Sacramento, California, Narinderjit Singh Bhullar, 40, of Sacramento, California, Rajwant S. Virk, 47, of Herndon, Virginia, Rachhpal Singh, 32, of Newark, California, and Kim Chi Lam, 53, of Gardena, California are scheduled to be sentenced on November 19th before Judge Burrell. An eleventh defendant is a fugitive.

The case is being prosecuted in U.S. District Court in Sacramento by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Benjamin B. Wagner and S. Robert Tice-Raskin and by Trial Attorney Noah D. Bookbinder of the Public Integrity Section, headed by Noel L. Hillman, Chief. It is the product of an extensive investigation conducted by the Diplomatic Security Service of the U.S. Department of State, and by agents with the FBI and several other state and federal agencies associated with the Joint Terrorism Task Force for the Eastern District of California, including the California Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the Bureau of Immigration Control and Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security. Sri Lankan law enforcement authorities also provided assistance in the investigation.

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